Council of Senior Centers and Services of New York City, Inc.
Post Event Summary Report
for
Officially Designated WHCOA Event

Name of Event: 16th Annual Conference; *Gratitude and Growth: Celebrating Diversity In Aging*

Date of Event: January 27, 2005

Location of Event: New York Hilton Hotel, 1335 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019

Number of Persons attending: 550

Sponsoring Organization(s): Council of Senior Centers and Services of New York City, Inc., 49 West 45th Street, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10036

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Priority Issue #1: (describe specific issue)
Diversity in Aging
Diversity is present in all aspects of life, but we must be particularly sensitive to it in the aging population. It is reflected in the food we serve, the activities we offer and the care we provide to those seniors we serve.

Barriers: (list any barriers that may exist related to this issue)
Barriers of all kinds exit to diversity – personal bias, cultural traditions, ignorance and many others.

Proposed Solution(s): (list suggested solutions to the challenges described above)
1   Sensitivity education on the issue.
2   Specific information on programming and food to provide to help promote diversity among seniors.
3   Provide rewards for the promotion of diversity.

Priority Issue #2: (describe specific issue)
Creativity in Aging
Research shows that keeping seniors involved in the creative process helps to keep them healthy, both physically and mentally.

Barriers: (list any barriers that may exist related to this issue)
It is difficult to convince those who provide funding that creativity is an essential need for seniors and not just a program frill. Seniors themselves are sometimes reluctant o be involved in some sort of creative process.

Proposed Solution(s): (list suggested solutions to the challenges described above)
1. Continue to do research on the creativity and aging issue.
2. Share research results with those who provide program funding for senior programs.
3. Increase the number creativity programs conducted for seniors.
4. Include creativity programs as part of the core program for seniors.

Priority Issue #3: (describe specific issue)
Serving cost-effective, nutritious food that is acceptable to seniors.

Barriers: (list any barriers that may exist related to this issue)
It is difficult to provide nutritious food that is acceptable to seniors on the amount of money budgeted. Seniors have strong likes and dislikes about food and it is difficult to get them to try new things.

Proposed Solution(s): (list suggested solutions to the challenges described above)
1. Develop a group food purchasing system to help economize.
2. Serve some new foods regularly along with those that are familiar to your seniors.
3. Introduce diverse foods to your seniors regularly.
4. Discuss food likes and dislikes with your seniors and help them create menus.

Priority Issue #4: (describe specific issue)
Economic security in retirement.

Barriers: (list any barriers that may exist related to this issue)
Possible changes in Social Security.

Proposed Solution(s): (list suggested solutions to the challenges described above)
1. Do not privatize Social Security.
2. Find other ways to fund Social Security in the future such as raising the retirement age, raising the income level for Social Security funding, or other ways.

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Priority Issue #5: (describe specific issue)
Quality care for seniors.

Barriers: (list any barriers that may exist related to this issue)
Seniors are often not valued members of society so are not provided the quality of care that they need.

Proposed Solution(s): (list suggested solutions to the challenges described above)
1. Provide programs to meet all the needs of seniors such as mental health services, social isolation, legal needs, dealing with death, housing, and others.
2. Find ways to meet the needs of caregivers so that they in turn can provide quality care to seniors.

Priority Issue #6: (describe specific issue)
Use new technology in aging services.

Barriers: (list any barriers that may exist related to this issue)
There is a lack of understanding of how new technology can be used in aging services. Resistance to technology also makes adapting it difficult.

Proposed Solution(s): (list suggested solutions to the challenges described above)
1. Develop demonstration programs using new technology to provide aging services.
2. Conduct training programs on new technology for those who provide aging services.

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